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not called *Etsu* but *Gomna Ture*, European Governor. Other ranks in the same *ena* were *Kantoma* (Station Magistrate), *Joji* (District Officer), *Likita* (Doctor); there was also the rank *Dupienne*, derived from the name of Mr. Dupigny, a former Resident of Niger Province, a rank *Borti* (Major Burton), *Mallam Smi* (Mr. Smith, a former Superintendent of Education), and *Jamsi Dogo* (lit. Long James, a title which referred to a former clerk in the Divisional Office); it was, not unnaturally, the lowest title on the rank-list. Another *ena* organized on modern lines was divided into two sections, a 'native' and a 'European' section, the former consisting of Nupe titles, the latter of Europeanized names and ranks, such as *Gomna*, *Joji*, *Likita*, *Rezdet* (Resident), *Kantoma*, *Misisi* (Mrs.), *Hafissa* (Officer), and *Karamin Joji* (Assistant District Officer). In the normal business of the *ena* these two sections behaved differently, and were bound by different rules of etiquette, native and 'European', which meant that the members of the 'European section' had to greet each other in European fashion, by lifting their caps, and had to eat at a table with fork and spoon. I could not help laughing when these rules were explained to me; but the head of the group pointed out, rather indignantly, that this was the most natural thing in the world; after all, 'a Governor does not eat with his hands'.

The seriousness with which these distinctions of ranks are observed, the realism with which this playing at society *à la Européenne* is enacted, forbids us to treat it merely as a childish and meaningless make-belief. Psychologically, it has the significance of a substitute for thrills and achievements which normal life cannot offer. The inclusion of titles and forms of conduct copied from the British officials in the country is part of that 'realism' which marks age-grade etiquette and precedence: it does justice to the new political order of the society, and partly also to the fact that high social position in present-day native society implies intimacy with the Administration and high British officials. If it were asked why the Bida *ena* chose as symbols for social gradation ranks and offices so far removed from their ordinary life, I should point out that there is less difference than one might assume between the two models which the *ena* could choose—the model of European and the model of native society. To the average Bida man the highest ranks and offices of his own society are no less remote and inaccessible than the office of a District Officer or Governor. We must add that the choice of a particular rank-system for the *ena* is in no way determined by the social stratum from which it is recruited. Bida age-grade associations of *tdlaka* and *saraki* alike adopt the highest ranks both of traditional and British society. Only for a small minority—the few *ena* of the ruling class—may these ranks and offices, and the whole exalted social life which they depict, one day become reality. For the large majority they represent an infinitely remote, imaginary social existence.

Here we are led to the wider problem of the relation between the world of pretence built up in the age-grade association and the values of 'real', that is, adult, social life. It can best be approached through a comparison of village and town *ena*. In the village association the social life enacted in the *ena*, and its prototype in adult life, stand in the relation of potentiality

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impact of alien influences and the vast increase in trade and traffic in the last few decades may well have aggravated the situation, all the available evidence (of genealogies and life histories) proves that the morals of women and the fate of marriages were, for the last four or five generations at least, much what they are today. Nor is this harking-back more than half-hearted; no one would claim that there was a time when all women were chaste and submissive, when they did not trade and earn money, and when contraceptive practices were unknown. Indeed such a claim, were it ever made, would be belied by the character of the *gunnu* ritual and by various legends and stories. Briefly, for the people the ideal was always out of step with the reality; so that we must judge this conflict to be inherent in the make-up of the society, whose economic system (which has certain moral consequences) is as unquestioned as are its ethical conceptions (which condemn these consequences).

This is important: for it is the inescapable nature of the conflict which finds expression in the belief in women witches. Nupe society, forced into an ambivalent attitude towards the role of women, which it cannot but accept and cannot but hate and call evil, also ascribes to them the powers of witchcraft. The coincidence as such is a matter of observed fact. But we can go further, and interpolate the psychological mechanism which turns the coincidence into a causal nexus, and hence enables us to call one thing the 'cause' and the other the 'symptom'. The mechanism is familiar: it lies in the projection of internal conflicts and of the frustrations so caused upon an external agent, real or imaginary. In our case, the awareness of an ideal state disturbed fastens upon the successful disturber; the helplessness in the face of a threatening situation turns into the positive fear of persons; and while one is incapable of dealing with the situation, one can at least deal with concrete individuals, whom one can accuse, persecute, and punish. So that in being made the witches of the society, the women are made to carry its fault or failure.

It is clear that this explanation holds good only on the assumption that the beliefs in witchcraft have been fashioned by men; for on almost every point we argued from a male standpoint. The legitimacy of this assumption need hardly be defended. The assertion of mundane morality, through legal institutions, falls to the men exclusively; above all, Nupe religion, its practices and doctrine, are fundamentally a male concern; and as it is the men who know and speculate about religion and have charge of the transmission of religious knowledge, so the notions of witchcraft must have been their creation. Situations of this kind are of course common; a great many societies are in this sense men-made and men-run; and if, like Nupe, they also afford considerable initiative and import-

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ance to women, they often, once more like Nupe, take back with one hand what they give with the other, that is, punish the permitted presumption by producing some belief in female witchery (whether taken literally or not).

But the male standpoint does not hold throughout; for the Nupe condemnation of voluntary sterility represents the women's judgment as much as the men's. From earliest youth the women accept child-bearing as the mission of their sex. If later in life they deny it, they deny what they know to be 'human nature': hence their furtive dealings with the medicine-man abortionist and the admitted shamefulness of this traffic. Let me stress that this means more than an attempt to evade the moral judgments of others. The Nupe woman has her lovers openly, and as openly flaunts her wealth and independence, the adverse moral judgments of the men notwithstanding. So that, in hiding the shame of not wanting children she hides a shame of which she is aware and a guilt which she accepts. This guilt is probably shared much more widely; for every woman who takes concrete steps to avoid child-bearing there must be another who at least harbours the secret desire. However this may be, like the frustration of the men, the guilt of the women, open or secret, is projected into the picture of the female witch. For the women equally accept this picture. Though they may not have created the witchcraft beliefs, they yet have a hand in transmitting them and keeping them alive; at least, they share in gossip of this kind, if less openly than the men, and fabricate such stories. Whenever they do, they speak as accusers, vehemently denying that the role of the witch could apply to them. Even so, they accuse their own sex and, circuitously, themselves.[1]

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The men, then, in the witchcraft fantasies, condemn an antagonist; the women, in the same vicarious fashion, condemn their own guilt. In the concrete punishment, however, which witches are expected to suffer the male standpoint once more emerges paramount. It is the men alone who battle with witches, defeat and chastise them, through the male society of *ndakó gboyá*, as it is also the men who, in the legends about witchcraft, are credited with the discovery of this weapon; and this, as we shall see, is employed, not only to trace and punish the culprits, but also to threaten and to subdue the womenfolk at large.

There is a certain twist to this picture of male vengeance. In the legends the men, in the person of the diviner and the 'old man', are straightforward destroyers of witches. But general

[1] Margaret Mead has drawn attention to the nexus between witchcraft beliefs and willed female sterility (see *Male and Female*, 1949, pp. 232–3). Her views, stated in a broader context, bear out much of what I have tried to say.

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belief assigns to them a more ambiguous role, holding that some —the diviners, medicine-men, and 'male witches'—also assist the female witch and hence become her partners in crime. This may still seem to be only a fantasy paraphrase or 'projection' of real life, where the man's role is similarly ambiguous; for he will both claim domestic authority and surrender it, thus so-to-speak aiding and abetting the female ambitions. In a more subtle sense, however, the witchcraft fantasies stand for the triumph of the male. Consider that the woman witch, to be successful, must make a compact with men—diviners, *cigbeciži* or male witches. Her fullest, that is, deadly powers depend on male aid, so that the men can curb her activities and frustrate her designs. Indeed one firmly clings to the belief that this is nearly always so, and that the male witch is 'good' and the female alone 'evil'. If a few men, whom no one can name, are willing to 'aid and abet' women witches, they have as it were betrayed their own sex; even so, their help has to be begged by the female witch. In brief, the men, victims of female ascendancy in real life and victims of female witchcraft in fantasy, are on the same fantasy plane also the masters of the women; and if in one sense female evilness may prevail, in another it exists on sufferance, subject to male permission and, ultimately, revenge.

So understood, the fantasy picture of witchcraft conjures up a relationship between the sexes which reverses reality, putting power for helplessness and dominance for submission. The projection of the conflict between reality and ideal thus merges with its resolution in terms of a wish-fulfilment. We conclude that Nupe witchcraft beliefs afford a double relief: the frustrations caused by a hated 'normality' are not only externalized so that they can be vented on concrete victims, but also spirited away and compensated in fantasy.

Both the projective mechanism and this other mechanism of 'compensation', which we interpolated between 'cause' and 'symptom', between certain conflicts and frustrations and the belief in female witchcraft, operate unconsciously, though the conflicts and frustrations themselves are fully conscious. But it might be asked if the 'causes', too, are not likely to reach down into the unconscious and to a level deeper than that represented by conflicts over authority, kinship position, or morality. These are all motives entailed in a particular social organization. And since the belief in female witchcraft is widespread throughout human society it would seem legitimate to search also for a cause of a more fundamental order, over and above those peculiar to this one type of society. The Nupe witchcraft beliefs, with their dichotomy of 'good' male and 'evil' female witches, indeed seem to point in that direction, towards some basic antagonism of the sexes.

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To substantiate this hypothesis I may be allowed to digress a little. It is, I think, true to say that man surrenders to woman his virility in the sex-act and his independence and self-containedness in the love relationship; the fulfilment of his desires is thus bought with the sacrifice of Ego-completeness. If we take this sacrifice to be unconsciously hateful, as I think we must, and accept this ambivalence of love-hatred as the source of an inescapable antagonism having no normal or legitimate outlet, then the belief in female witches (of the Nupe or any other people) represents a 'displacement' and licensed expression of the repressed hatred. The phrase 'having no normal outlet' requires some comment. Different cultures fashion the normal social relationship between the sexes in widely diverse ways, as has been amply demonstrated in the work of Margaret Mead. But few societies can by this means fully resolve the conflict of sex antagonism. If the society makes the men the socially dominant sex, it is able to compensate for the surrender of virility but fails to express the importance of the woman as sexual partner and procreatrix, and hence invites male fears of female revenge; and if the social dominance of men is reduced, either by design (as in some societies) or in consequence of uncontrollable social processes (as in Nupe), this produces the kind of situation we have been discussing. There is some evidence that a carefully balanced relationship between the sexes can avoid this impasse.[1] But where it does not, the psychological mechanism of projection, with its offer of vicarious or fantasy hatreds, comes into play.

Now this is only a bare formula, couched in terms of universal validity. Let me fill it in with details from Nupe society. To begin with, the 'surrender' and loss of 'completeness' on the part of the men may be felt more strongly in some societies than in others, that is, reach consciousness to a different degree. The Nupe men, certainly, make much of the physically weakening effects of sexual intercourse, and teach the younger generation to husband their strength; they also, as we know, readily employ aphrodisiacs and so betray their fear of the loss of potency. At the same time, they will comment on the sexual voraciousness of the women, who never seem to have enough lovers. The Nupe, incidentally, do not conceive of erotic relationships that could avoid this threat to their virility: homosexuality among the men does not seem to occur and is thought absurd as well as repulsive. Yet again, homosexuality does occur among the women, which fact is well known to the men.[2] For the Nupe, then, the woman is more 'complete'

[1] See my chapter on 'Dual Descent in the Nuba Hills', in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, ed. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, 1950, pp. 354 ff.
[2] See *A Black Byzantium*, p. 152.

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in herself than the man and her sex less vulnerable; above all, her satisfaction, more insatiable than the man's, threatens his virility. So that everything we said before, in general terms, about male 'surrender' and 'incompleteness' is sharply accentuated in Nupe culture.

Everything, too, reappears, appropriately rephrased, in the witchcraft fantasies: witches feed on the life and strength of a man as women do on his virility; and his anxieties are allayed or compensated in a wish-fulfilment which sees the female witch incomplete, possessed only of half her power without a help she must beg of men.[1]

Admittedly, the witchcraft legends fail to corroborate this view, containing nothing that could be construed into a reference to the sexual dominance of women. Rather on the contrary: in the first legend the witch is a 'mother' dominating her son; and though the second legend enlarges upon the licentiousness and sexual greed of the young women, the really dangerous 'witch' is pictured as an old hag against whom younger men are helpless. But the aspect of female dominance is there; and if it is removed from the sphere of sex it is brought closer to the overt anxieties and frustrations of the Nupe men. They face precisely this threat, from 'mothers' who assume an illegitimate power in the family, and from overbearing women who abandon their role of partners in marriage. Perhaps the 'old woman' too fits into the picture; for being 'old' means being beyond child-bearing; so that the figure of a woman who has left child-bearing behind would seem to stand for all the women who reject it. If then, the legends fail to express the antagonism between the sexes in its basic and universal form, they express instead the immediate, concrete conflicts of the society. In other words, of two possible motivations the legends embody one.

This leads me to my final point. This new explanation, in terms of a basic sex antagonism, neither overrules nor clashes with those previously suggested, in terms of other motivations. Rather, they are all valid, relating to different aspects or elements of that total phenomenon, the Nupe witchcraft beliefs. It is indeed a fundamental feature of social phenomena, if they are of any complexity, that they tend to embody a plurality of motives, belonging to varying levels of human concern, impulse, and consciousness. Our several explanations reflect this plurality of motives; more pre-

[1] I am aware that psycho-analysts may read the facts differently and relate the fantasy picture of female witches to a love-hatred of women which has its roots in the man's mother-imago, or in the conflict between 'tenderness' and 'sexuality' in love, or perhaps in the sadistic components of the sex act. I will only say, briefly, that my analysis of Nupe society does not bear out these alternative explanations.

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cisely, there had to be three explanations, corresponding to different levels of motivation, which are levels of generality as well. The first was concerned with the ascription of witchcraft to concrete individuals: this we related to the overt value judgments of the people, that is, to the conscious assessment of socially desirable conduct and character traits. The second explanation was concerned with the ascription of witchcraft to the female sex: here the processes creative of the belief were unconscious though set in motion by judgments on socially desirable behaviour and by the conscious conflict between ideal and reality. The third explanation, once more concerned with the ascription of witchcraft to women, was in terms of unconscious impulses springing from an unconscious conflict: and this we took to be determined, no longer by particular social circumstances, but by events on that 'deeper level' on which sex antagonism, in man everywhere, has its play. There is perhaps a further, most general level of enquiry; for we may clearly ask why there should be witchcraft at all? why people should believe in such a deadly evil inexorably vested in some of their kind? This question must for the moment be postponed.

4. SYMPTOMATOLOGY: CASE HISTORIES

As has been said, only a witch, or a person possessing the appropriate *cigbe*, is able to tell a witch; others can only suspect the presence of witchcraft, however reliable the indications. The clues employed in this work of detection are similarly divided, into esoteric signs visible only to the fellow witch or sorcerer, and the crude indications which everyone can read. The former are, needless to say, entirely intangible and mystical. Thus at night you may see witches breathe fire (if you are yourself a witch); if a lesser witch meets a more powerful one, tears will spring to the eyes of the former; witches, finally, see one another in their dreams. Persons possessing a *cigbe* which makes them like witches should also be able to see or recognize them, and such medicines, as I have said, are in fact produced; but a few sceptics dismiss these claims as so much idle talk. It is a highly qualified scepticism, casting no doubts on the witchcraft beliefs as such. The Master of the *cigbeciki* summed it up most clearly, in this analogy: 'We see the lightning; we say *Sokó* causes it: but has anyone seen him do it? So we see what witches do, but who says he has seen a witch is lying.' The mystery which surrounds the manner of beholding witches extends also to their appearance; for the Nupe have no clear picture of what a witch looks like save that she looks horrid and fearful.

Though ordinary persons cannot see witches, dogs and cats can,